



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **MARYLAND COMPANY AND FAMILY MEMBERS CHARGED IN IMPORTATION CONSPIRACY TO DISTRIBUTE MERCHANDISE INFRINGING NASCAR TRADEMARKS AND LORD OF THE RINGS COPYRIGHTS**

**Baltimore, Maryland** - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Allen F. Loucks announces today that a federal grand jury has returned a Superseding Indictment charging NFZ Products, Inc. and three senior NFZ employees, Mohammed Aslam, age 57 and his sons Farhan Aslam, age 31 and Zeeshawn Aslam, age 27, all of Ellicott City, Maryland, with a criminal conspiracy to import and distribute: switchblade knives, knives and boxed knife sets with counterfeit NASCAR and NASCAR related trademarks; and knives and swords violating United Cutlery and Lord of the Rings copyrights. The Superseding Indictment seeks forfeiture of \$955,166.74.

The Superseding Indictment, unsealed today upon the arrests of Mohammed and Zeeshawn Aslam, alleges that the defendants participated in a conspiracy to import and distribute the prohibited merchandise from approximately October 16, 1995 to March 24, 2005. The counterfeit knives and swords were imported from foreign countries, namely Pakistan, Taiwan and China. The Superseding Indictment further alleges that the defendants committed specific violations of the federal anti-smuggling, switchblade, copyright, and trademark statutes, filed false customs entries, and concealed evidence subject to a federal investigation. The Superseding Indictment also alleges that Farhan Aslam tried to influence the testimony of a witness before a federal grand jury by instructing the witness to misrepresent his duties at NFZ.

United States Attorney Allen Loucks stated that "The distribution of merchandise with counterfeit copyrights and trademarks strikes at the heart of America's economy. It deprives our citizens of their right to be paid for their creative labors."

A criminal indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

All of the defendants are charged with conspiracy, smuggling goods, distribution of

switchblade knives, trafficking in counterfeit goods, copyright infringement and concealment in a federal investigation. Farhan Aslam also is charged with witness tampering. The Aslams face a maximum sentence of 20-years imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$2,000,000. NFZ faces a maximum fine of \$5 million and probation. Mohammed and Zeeshawn Aslam are scheduled to have their initial appearances today.

The criminal charges against these defendants are the result of a joint investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Customs and Border Protection, (CBP) and the United States Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Joyce K. McDonald and Harry M. Gruber.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*